

JANUARY 2007

# Facets

*for women*

## The last resolution

Learn how to make a resolution you'll stick with

## Eye on priorities

Moms explain how they keep their large families humming

## Organizing pro

'Miracle Mary' helps others get their lives in order





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## notes from the newsroom

By HEIDI MARTTILA-LOSURE



Do you regularly spend 10 minutes in the morning looking for your keys? Or have you ever had to buy another pair of scissors because yours are missing? Or do you often feel frazzled because you have too much to do and you don't know where to start?

If this describes you, take a deep breath and dive into this issue of Facets. We have some answers for you.

First check out the story of professional organizer Mary Sigmund, who has helped many disorganized people reform their ways. Getting their surroundings in order can do wonders for their outlook on life, she says: "I always leave people feeling a lot better."

Then read up on the stories of Jayne Misra and Donna Moore, who mother families of eight and five children, respectively. They have figured out ways to make life in a big family not only manageable but joyful.

There's much more in this issue to help you get organized, including financial advice from organized women, tips on sorting children's school papers, and time-management book reviews. And when you've learned the lesson that time management and organization is all about determining your priorities, read Marian Solomon's story. Solomon, who has worked for 50 years to champion peace throughout the world, is one woman who has her priorities in the right place.

Enjoy your new beginning!

— Heidi Marttila-Losure, editor

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# WELCOME TO Facets

Time management  
and organization

Facet > 1. One of the flat  
surfaces cut on a gemstone.

2. The particular angle  
from which something  
is considered.

FACETS IS A SUPPLEMENT TO THE TRIBUNE

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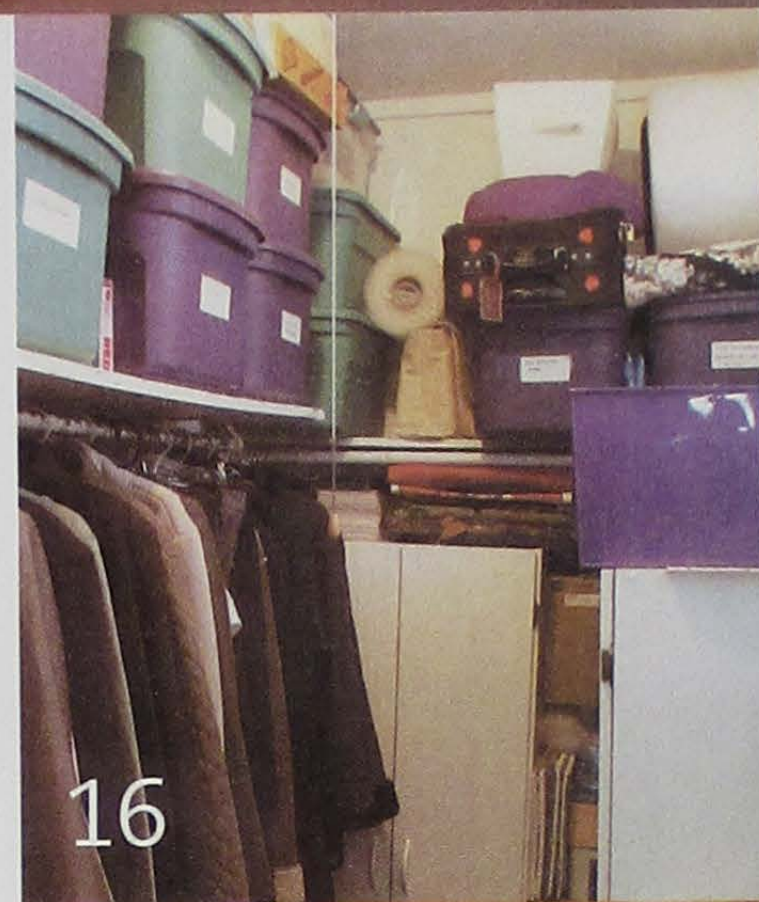
Professional organizer  
Mary Sigmund has  
enjoyed decorating her  
Ames apartment with  
local art.

By Andrew Rullestad

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Relationships

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# FACETS calendar

If you have an event that would be of interest to Facets readers, please send it to [hlosure@amestrib.com](mailto:hlosure@amestrib.com) with "Facets Calendar" in the subject line.

DO YOU HAVE A PHOTO of women getting together? Send it to [hlosure@amestrib.com](mailto:hlosure@amestrib.com) and you might see your face here!

**Jan. 2** – Closing sale begins at 10 a.m. at the little pillow company, 408 Kellogg Ave. "After a successful three year run, we are clearing out and closing shop," owner Ginger Johnson says. Goods, supplies and fixtures will be for sale. Sales and hours will be posted on the door at the Loft.

**Jan. 9** – NetWorks Event, 7:45 to 9 a.m., at 408 Kellogg Ave., Ames. Here's an opportunity to meet new people to build both professional and personal connections. It's a free event hosted by Ginger Johnson of Snap! Creative Works. You are required to bring your business cards and an open mind. All types of businesses are welcome, independent to large corporations. Call 450-7757 with any questions. Please be prompt.

**Jan. 9** – Ames MOPs (Mothers of Preschoolers) monthly meeting, 7 to 9 p.m., Bridgeway Administration office, 1005 Top-O-Hollow Road.

**Jan. 11** – Brown Bag Lunch at Reiman Gardens, featuring the program "The 2007 Theme Year: Excellence in Bloom: Celebrating 150 Years at Iowa State University" by Lisa Orgler, noon to 1 p.m. Free for CoHorts' members, price of admission for guests.

**Jan. 11** – Arrangement of the Month: Botany in a Basket program at Reiman Gardens, 7 to 8 p.m. Create a unique floral display to take home. Each month, arrangements will be inspired by colleges or departments at Iowa State. This

month focuses on Botany, housed in the Department of Ecology, Evolution and Organismal Biology. \$25 for CoHorts' members and \$30 for guests per session; discount for multiple sessions. Registration and pre-payment required.

**Jan. 18** – Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Celebration, 4 p.m., Sun Room of the Memorial Union, Iowa State University. Musical groups and speakers celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. King.

**Jan. 25** – Botany Lunch: Foods from the Woods at Reiman Gardens, noon to 1 p.m. Reiman Gardens' chef Scott Welbourn will create elegant three-course menus inspired by Dr. Louis Pammel's botany dinner where he listed all the plants in the menu. \$20.95 per person for CoHorts' members and guests. Please reserve a place and pre-pay by Jan. 18. Visit [www.reimangardens.iastate.edu](http://www.reimangardens.iastate.edu) or call 294-2710 for menu details.

**Jan. 27 and 28** – Kidz Days, noon to 6 p.m. each day, Bergstrom Indoor Practice Facility at Iowa State University. Fun and games for children include inflatables, mascots, magic, stage shows and more. Tickets are \$4; children 2 and younger get in free.

**Feb. 8** – Lecture on "Race and Abortion" by Allveda C. King, 8 p.m., Sun Room of the Memorial Union, Iowa State University. King is director of the African American Outreach for Gospel of Life and niece of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

By HEIDI MARTTILA-LOSURE



Harold Jensen and Marilyn Loupee, left couple, and Jean Hassebrock and Dennis Wendell, right couple, all of Ames, twirl to the sounds of a player piano in Wendell's home during the Holiday Home Tour on Dec. 2. The tour was sponsored by Altrusa International of Ames and benefited Ames Public Library, Ames Historical Society and Habitat for Humanity. Earlier, guests were also treated to sounds from the phonograph at left.

By HEIDI MARTTILA-LOSURE



Diane Granzow, of McCallsburg; Lori Kauffman, of Story City; and Anne Lara, of Story City, share a laugh with homeowner Ginger Johnson on the Holiday Home Tour on Dec. 2. Johnson and her husband, Larry Chase (not pictured), were one of five couples or individuals who opened their homes for the tour. The Kegerator (a home beer-dispensing device), shown at left, in the couple's living room attracted a lot of attention. Chase is brewmaster for Granite City Food & Brewery, which has a processing facility in Ellsworth.

DO YOU HAVE A PHOTO of women getting together? Send it to [hlosure@amestrib.com](mailto:hlosure@amestrib.com) and you might see your face here!



## [ SKIN CARE ]

# Leave fat, wrinkles behind as you start the New Year

By DR. KATHY COOK

With the New Year come resolutions for most of us. Read on to see if a dermatologist can help you keep them this year!

**WEIGHT LOSS** is the most common resolution and is one of the hardest to keep. There is a new way to get rid of those unwanted inches that you just can't seem to lose. It is called Lipodissolve and is a nonsurgical alternative to liposuction. This involves a series of injections into the area of unwanted fat with substances that occur naturally within the body. These injections cause the fat cells to dissolve, and they are permanently gone. As with any procedure, there are risks, including temporary itching and bruising, and not everyone is a candidate for it. Ideally, people should be near their ideal weight, as this is more of a body-sculpting procedure and not intended for weight loss. This is available in many large cities and now also in Ames at Skin Solutions Dermatology.

**YOUNGER-LOOKING SKIN:** Another resolution to look better might include improving the sagging of the skin with a facelift or other procedure. If there is a lot of skin sagging, a facelift may be your best option. However, many people do not want to undergo surgery or may not need that much help. One procedure that is a nonsurgical alternative is Thermage. This involves using radiofrequency to cause the underlying collagen to tighten and pull up the sagging skin over a six-month time frame. This is a single procedure without any healing time that is visible. This same procedure can also be done on many body areas. This is also available at Skin Solutions Dermatology.

**OTHER RESOLUTIONS:** There are many ways to improve your appearance, and many are noninvasive and have no visible healing or "down time." Taking care of ourselves by eating healthy and getting enough exercise and sleep are easy enough to say but can be hard to follow through with. As a busy mother and physician, I have trouble doing the right things, too. So make your resolutions now and stick with them — and let's see if I can do it this year!



Dr. Kathy L.P. Cook is a board-certified dermatologist and owner of Skin Solutions Dermatology, 500 Main St., in Ames. She can be reached at 232-3006.





# The last resolution

By DEBRA ATKINSON

**T**he history of making New Year's resolutions goes back at least two millennia. There must be something to our love for new beginnings and fresh starts. It's a ritual born out of a desire to close the door on the past and look ahead to health, peace and prosperity. Somewhere amid broken, abandon or forgotten resolve of New Year's, however, it's a wonder there is any peace. How can you stay on track with your resolutions? How can you create resolutions that rock? Find out how to make the one and only resolution you need in the future: Stop making resolutions you know you won't keep.

The most common of resolutions are lose weight, get fit, eat right, drink less alcohol, reduce stress, reduce stress at work, save money, get a better job, stop smoking and take a trip. With each, there is something attached. It's an if-then prospect. If I lose weight, then I'll be loved more. If I reduce my stress, I'll have more energy. Of those 10 resolutions, only one of them truly is only positive. Take a trip. The rest feature actions to get there related to giving up what you like best, making time for things you hate to do, or suffering cravings for things you can't have ... not very motivating!

Here are some suggestions to help you stay on track.

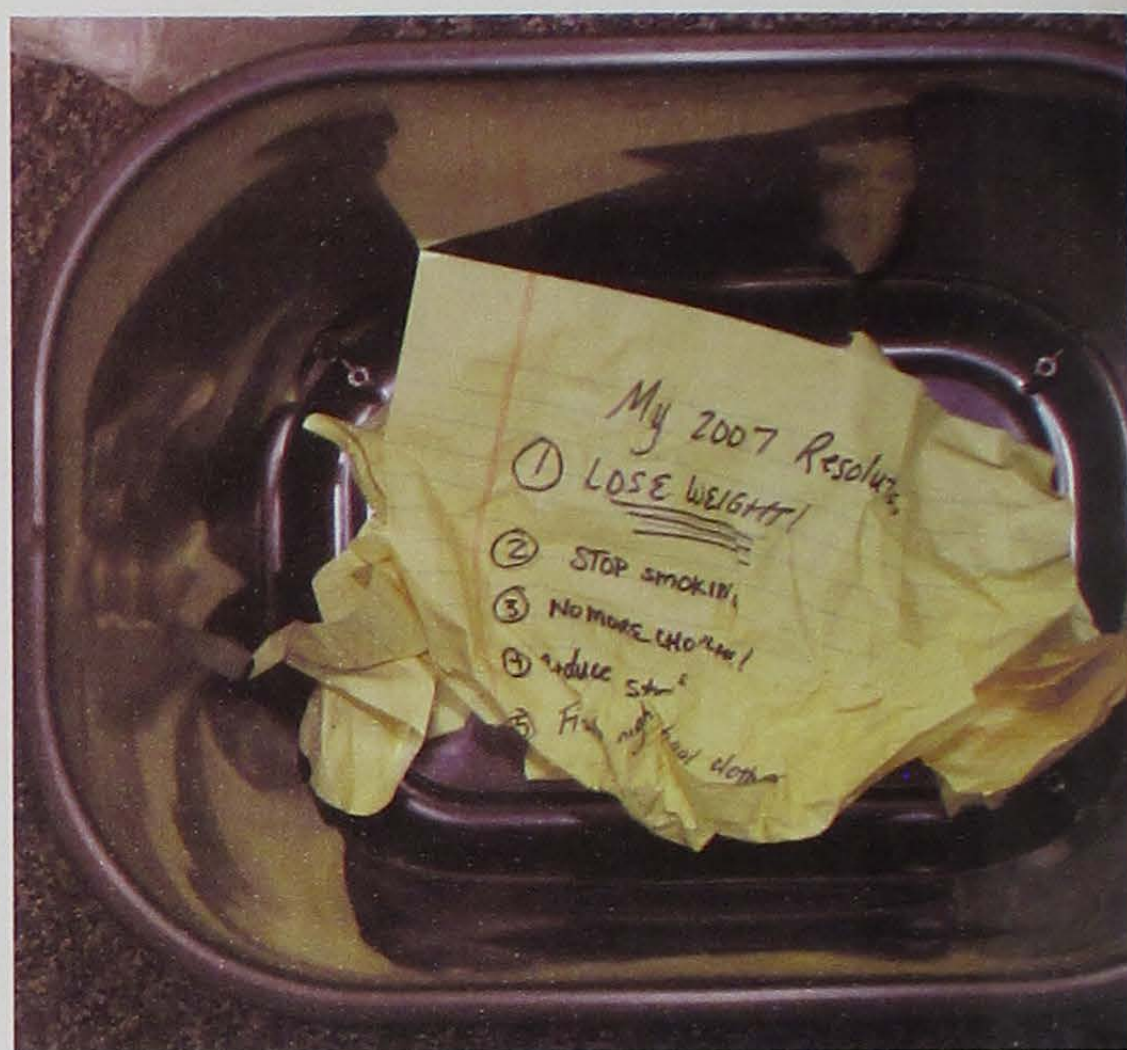
**Think positive.** If in fact you're bound and determined to have a resolution in the first place, make it something that you want to run to rather than some-

thing punitive. The biggest problem with resolutions is you state them in terms that are negative and unrealistic. Therefore, you are unmotivated and you procrastinate until ultimately you forget them all together.

**Buy into success.** Another big problem with resolutions? You don't believe it when you say it. If you say you want to lose weight, for instance, but then actually keep your "fat clothes," you haven't bought into success in the first place. If you really want a resolution to become who you are now, you'll have to let go of your "old" self. Let go of your fat clothes, and more important, your old way of thinking.

**Get more creative than punitive** with your resolution for better results. Instead of thinking you have to just sweat it out at the gym, explore a little. You could be learning to belly dance, hip hop, or ballroom dance rather than be on the treadmill. You could partner train with a friend and catch up, enjoy some laughs and share some time as you get more fit together.

**Find painless resolutions.** We are motivated by two things: running from pain or running toward pleasure. The latter is much more fun and more desirable, and it makes you run faster. Make it about trying something new — ballroom dance, a strength-training class, meditation or yoga. Pick a number from one to 30. On that day every month this year, try something new: a food, an exercise, a half-day off or a half-day



working to make it the most productive of any other day of the month.

**Create another angle to get you motivated.** If you gain momentum, you will find the way easier. Not without work, but easier. So clean up your office space, clean up the desktop and e-mail archives. Organize a closet. The lightness around doing that will have a domino effect.

**Find gratitude in where you are right now.** Find worth and value in people and connections that are not related to you changing at all. Pay a compliment to at least one person one time a week. Handwrite a letter once a month. Follow up on your clients without a reason. Changing might make it great, but the point is to not need to run from something because now is good.

## Remember to celebrate.

Thinking a goal has to hurt only pushes it further away. Celebrate the number of times you make it to the gym, that you do cardiovascular or weight training. Track it on the calendar, and when you reach 30, reward yourself with a new book, new CD or massage. If you spend half your life trying to forgive yourself for your faults, and half trying to change, there isn't much left. Give up looking back and looking forward in exchange for the gift called the present.



Debra Atkinson is a senior lecturer in the Department of Health and Human Performance at Iowa State University and personal training director at Ames

Racquet and Fitness Center. She can be reached at 296-2989.





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# The **STRENGTH** of her convictions

Marian Solomon has spent much of her life working for peace

By SUSAN CANNY VERNON

**M**arian Solomon stood before the crowd of admirers wearing a hand-embroidered dress from Jerusalem. In her hand, she clutched religious symbols from around the world, and at her neck was pinned a small white dove of peace.

Her ensemble gave visible testimony to Solomon's values and to the focus of her life's work. In her honor, The Ames Interfaith Council established The Marian Solomon Champion of Peace Award and selected her as its first recipient.

"We want to underscore the importance of courageous people who work on behalf of peace and justice," said interfaith council chair Stephen Aigner. "The world would be a far better place if we would all emulate Marian."

Solomon's acceptance speech Dec. 5 had the quality of a compelling sermon. She implored her listeners to care about other people, to seek understanding and to work towards a more peaceful tomorrow.

"We must do something better!" she cried.

## **Fifty years for peace**

Solomon is passionate about her Christian faith and about affecting change and promoting understanding. She has worked for more than 50 years championing the cause of peace throughout the world. She has

lived in India, visited Central America and traveled the Middle East. She is a veteran of the civil rights movement and the continued struggle for social justice. She is a wife, a mother, a nurse, a grandmother, an active member of two churches, a tireless community volunteer and an admired friend of many.

"Everything Marian does, she does to the max," raved friend Deborah Blaedel.

Solomon's daughter, Becky Mussleman, speaks highly of her mother as well.

"What is most special about my mom," she said, "is the strength of her convictions and her active participation in seeking change. Additionally, my mom's love of all children, her desire for humans to be respected and treated fairly and her willingness to help those who are suffering are special qualities."

Solomon is reluctant to accept the praise. For her, it is all about the work.

"We are all led in one way or another," she said simply.

## **Young bride sees the world**

Marian Solomon felt led when she kissed her husband goodbye two days after their wedding in 1953 and headed to India. While husband Ted began seminary study at Boston



By JON BRITTON

Marian Solomon has championed the cause of peace throughout the world for more than 50 years.



University, Solomon traveled across the world to spend several years teaching and providing health care to children in a school dedicated to Gandhi. It was this first experience living abroad that opened her eyes to the state of the world and the intense need for people of other cultures to try to understand one another.

Ironically, it was during her travels outside of the United States that Solomon first felt called to work toward understanding within her own nation. Questions from her international friends compelled her to begin thinking about joining the civil rights movement back home. When she returned to the United States in the mid-1950s, she immersed herself in a peaceful and lengthy battle for civil rights. With her growing family living first in New England, then Chicago, North Carolina and Florida, Marian worked diligently for equal rights for all Americans. Her young son Richard stood by her side as she protested at the 1960 Republican National Convention in Chicago. It was one of many demonstrations of which Marian has been a part.

Solomon's efforts were not limited to protests. As a member of the PTA at her children's integrated Hyde Park school, Solomon fought for textbooks, for playgrounds and for children to be taught the same skills their peers were learning in other neighborhoods.

As a secretary of the NAACP in Scotland County, North Carolina, in the early 1960s, she worked to spread the word that blacks were allowed to vote and to register as many as she could.

While living in Florida, she joined Alfred King in prayer for the just treatment of workers of all races. It was this pray-in that led to her first arrest, and she

spent four hours in a St. Petersburg jail before being released.

"I have been in jail longer than that," she laughed.

When the Solomons moved to Iowa with their three children in 1969, they had been deeply enmeshed in social activism of all types for nearly two decades. In fact, as Gov. Harold Hughes introduced the couple to ISU President Robert Parks at their very first faculty reception, he referred to them laughingly as his favorite jailbirds.

### **'There's an awful lot of suffering'**

As the couple began their life in Ames with their three children, Solomon found new ways to contribute to a more peaceful, understanding society. She actively protested the Vietnam War. She began working with international women, helping them adjust to American society. She continued her career in nursing in mental health and home health care at Mary Greeley. She became involved in the Ames Friends Society and Collegiate United Methodist Church, served on the Iowa Peace Network Board and served as a township trustee.

As her children grew, her focus broadened, and she began to take her mission of peace to other parts of the world. She traveled twice to Central America in the 1980s as part of a Witness for Peace group meeting with Contras, Sandinistas, and common people. She spent time in Mexico alongside a Catholic worker group. She traveled to Israel seeking to understand both Israelis and Palestinians. In her 70s, in 2000 and 2002, she traveled to Iraq with the Christian Peacemakers.

Everywhere she travels she seeks to understand, to see firsthand the issues, the people, the pain.

"There is an awful lot of suffering in the world," she mourned, "an awful lot of darkness."

She has heard tales of Palestinian children being tormented by their Israeli peers and

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**"You have to convince people the current situation is in crisis. Sometimes that is difficult for people to see. I have felt this is my calling in life, to try and make people see."**

---

— Marian Solomon

witnessed Palestinian villages being left completely off of maps in Israel as if they ceased to exist. She has listened while Israelis expressed their sadness at the suffering of their fellow countrymen. She has watched instances of cancer grow in parts of the world affected by war. She has heard the cries of children in the streets of war-torn villages. She has seen U.S. weaponry in the hands of people all over the world.

Everywhere she travels she tries to understand. She talks to those she can and tries to sell her message of peace.

"People are people," she said. "When you get to know them you are no longer so apt to categorize them."

Each time she returns she bears witness to what she has seen.

"You have to convince people the current situation is in crisis,"

she said. "Sometimes that is difficult for people to see. I have felt this is my calling in life, to try and make people see."

"Using military response to things is not helpful. Building more bombs does not feed anybody, does not clothe anybody. Either we are going to stop destroying our universe or we will not have our universe!"

### **'You can make a difference'**

Marian Solomon's life story is colorful and inspiring, but she tells it only as a means of conveying her message to a society she sees becoming increasingly individualistic.

"I wish that people could see that there is more to life than the accumulation of junk for oneself," she said.

Solomon encourages young people in this community to savor its diversity and to seize opportunities to travel, to study abroad and to learn about other cultures.

"If you leave yourself open to opportunities and aren't afraid, you can make a difference," she said. "Vote. Participate in organizations that are concerned about the world. There are many in Ames. If everyone follows what they feel called to do, we can do it."

Next year the Interfaith Council has promised Solomon she can help select the champion of peace who will receive the award that bears her name. She looks forward to honoring some vital young peacemaker who is answering his or her call to make a difference.

"I have to have the sense of hope," she said, "that if we as a people are willing to look beyond ourselves, there is hope for us to be so much more."

Susan Canny Vernon is a freelance writer living in Ames. She can be reached at [smvernon@mchsi.com](mailto:smvernon@mchsi.com).



# Emptying the attic

By NANCY LEWIS

**I**t is very hard for me to throw things away. So they pile up. Letters and papers tend to settle on the dining room table, and when the surface has to be cleared they find a home in a basket or a box to be sorted later.

"Later" is now, and I'm busily throwing away last spring's travel lists and church newsletters from March 2005. I have a wastebasket full of newspaper articles that I meant to send to my children a year ago. I found the rough draft of the second Facets article I wrote and the background material for two other articles.

And of course I'm asking myself, "Why did you let this go so long?"

For one thing, these are aspects of correspondence that I can't always deal with on the day they arrive in the mail. Sometimes I'm collecting several things to mail out. I may just have been too busy to file documents at the time.

But I suspect that the real answer is that I need a certain level of clutter. Bare, empty surfaces cry out to me to cover them with unanswered letters or catalogs, with coupons and sale flyers.

We spent 35 years in a 10-room house with a good-sized basement and a full attic. The attic was full, always. Every few years I would have my children bring down to the living room everything that was in the attic, and we would sort it all out and only put some of it back. (One year we counted 200 stuffed animals. I made them give away 75.) But it was easier for me to put stuff in the attic than to dispose of it, so the attic would fill up again. The basement also was full of things but, since I went down to the basement more often than I went up to the attic, I did tend to throw away things from the basement more often.

Incidentally, I once was invited to tour a historic home in our neighborhood. It was about the same size as our house and it also had a full attic, with nothing in it! I so admire the woman who lived there, but I know I could never be like her.

When we moved into our present home, which

has less storage space, I had to toss out many things and find good homes for many others. I estimate that in terms of volume, we got rid of half of what had been in the house that we left. I did move some things that should have been sorted, because I ran out of time and we had room for the boxes in our new home.

Then, rather suddenly, my mother had to leave her home and go to a care center. It took me nine months and a lot of help from my sister, my children, and Mom's kind neighbor, but I finally reduced the things that needed to come from her house to our house to 35 boxes.

Early in 2006, my husband looked around our storage area and announced that I had recreated the attic. This was not meant to be a compliment. So in the summer our two sons came for a weekend, and they and I reduced Grandma's boxes by half. Since then I have managed to eliminate two more.

Also, I have been trying to let go of more of my own things. I find that if I can give them away it's a lot easier. So I try to donate to nonprofit institutions' rummage sales. I will be handing on the genealogy materials to a cousin who deals with such things for our family. I plan to pass the doll clothes that an aunt made for our daughters to the next generation of little girls. And I've made some progress in removing from my closet the clothes that I haven't worn in the past year.

Two books have helped me with developing a philosophy of emptying out the house, though so far I haven't put the philosophy into practice as often as I wish I had. One is called "Clutter Control," written by Jeff Campbell. It has lots of practical suggestions and a section on the psychology of clutter that I agree with. He says that you can't change in a day, that you should give yourself credit for whatever you accomplish (no matter how small a dent it makes in the mess), and that you should start with whatever bothers you the most.

The other book is "Excess Baggage" by Judith Sills. The "baggage" in the title is personal baggage, feelings that make it harder for people to do what is necessary. I know that I need to try to understand why I have trouble in cleaning up my clutter before I can actually be comfortable in reducing it.



Nancy Lewis made this wall hanging several years ago when she was trying to think through some difficult psychological problems. Chaos is at the bottom; thoughts are sorted out in the middle; order and strength are at the top. "Maybe I need to look at it for answers to my clutter situation," she said.



Nancy Lewis lives in Ames and can be reached at 233-2874 or [nswlewis@hotmail.com](mailto:nswlewis@hotmail.com).



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# money maestros

By KAREN PETERSEN



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## NANCY ANDERSON

Nancy Anderson is a commercial and residential Realtor for Century 21 Signature Real Estate. After work, Nancy, who considers personal fitness as a priority, spends time at the gym. She sees similarities between keeping her body and her finances in shape.

"Money management and fitness need to become a part of your lifestyle," she says. "Both are enhanced by professional guidance, require discipline and produce long-term rewards."

## Nancy's strategies for money management:

Nancy and her husband, Kelly, use the divide-and-conquer method of making money decisions.

Nancy, because of her background in financial and business management, does the actual bill paying and reconciling on the 1st and 15th of each month. She pays bills in three ways: with automatic electronic payments when possible, with checks when necessary, or by debit card when available.

She uses online banking, receives and pays credit cards online, uses Quicken to track all income and expenses and always reconciles accounts each month.

The family savings habits have evolved from "save what is left at the end of the month" to a more disciplined and routine approach of saving a predetermined percent of all income and bonuses.

## Nancy's money management philosophy:

"Take care of the basics first — home budget, life insurance, a will, automatic savings (including employer plans), emergency cash reserve and health/disability insurance," Nancy says. "Only when basics are covered, consider more advanced investment strategies."

Some of the worst advice Nancy hears is, "Live (spend) for today because you never know what tomorrow will bring." Financially speaking, that's not the best advice when you get to "tomorrow"!

Nancy is helping her daughter, Kim, a freshman at Iowa State University, learn to manage money. She offers this advice to her daughter and to all young women learning to manage money: "Track your expenditures and take time to review them so you know where the money is going! Consciously decide how you want to spend your money. Some call that budgeting."



IMAGES BY NGAIRE/233-5447

## DEB KRAUTH

Deb Krauth, an attorney in Ames, has an interesting and time-demanding private law practice. Her energy extends to serving on boards for nonprofits and other community activities. Her most recent venture is writing articles for a female boomer Web site.

## Deb's money management method:

Deb is a self-taught money manager; she says she learned mostly by osmosis. Here's what she does:

Deb pays all bills online once early in month. She has used online bill pay for five years and is not concerned about security or



**Do busy women, all good time managers, manage their money as well as their time? I chose three busy women, all women I admired, and asked them to share their methods of money management.**

confidentiality. If any non-regular bills straggle in, she adds them to online bill pay. All savings in qualified plans also are automatically deducted.

Deb says she considers local investments (banks, ethanol and others) as the opportunities arise.

She also uses the expertise of her financial advisor when making investment decisions.

#### Learning from tracking

At one point about four years ago, Deb said she was not aware of her spending habits.

"At the end of the year, I reviewed all my expenditures and categorized them," she said. "I was shocked and appalled at the amount I spent on a couple of the categories, like clothing.

"Jan. 1, I started to track my monthly spending. When I had the facts about my spending, I knew I wanted to make some changes."

**Here are the changes Deb committed to:**

- Reduce spending significantly.
- Allocate more money for travel.
- Make more charitable gifts.

Once Deb identified her spending habits, she made changes. She now spends significantly less each year and gives more to charities, and her travel budget has taken her to Ireland, Europe and Italy.

Deb is fine-tuning her spending again.

"I would like to reduce the amount I spend on clothes and increase the amount available for travel," Deb said. "For me, analyzing and refining my spending is not a one-time event; it is an ongoing project."

Deb's advice about money management to young women is obvious: "Budgeting and discipline are required, in my book."



IMAGES BY NGAIRE/233-5447

#### JOHNIE HAMMOND

After a varied and interesting career, Johnie Hammond is beginning a new phase of life. Johnie and her husband, Earl, are leaving their home of 50 years to move to a new home at Northcrest.

#### A lifelong strategy:

I wanted to know the secret, what the Hammonds had done "right" to get to this wonderful phase in their lives. When I asked Johnie to tell me their secrets, I was surprised by her answer.

"Neither of us values money much," she said. "We just aimed to have enough to not worry. We did not want to have enough to buy everything in sight, because we do not want many things. The typical symbols of success are not important to us; we lived in the same house for 50 years.

"We are rich because we live simply. We have everything we want."

When 25-year-old Earl Hammond proposed to 19-year-old Johnie, she surprised and impressed him when she insisted they "make a budget" to determine if they could afford to be married.

From the day she was born, frugality was a part of Johnie's life. Lessons about coping with very little money were modeled by her mother, who, on the day Johnie was born, became a widow with three little girls to support.

#### Matching money and principles:

The Hammonds work with an investment advisor; his recommendations have been valuable, but Johnie does recall one time she needed to advise him. "He was extolling the value of tax exempt bonds," Johnie said. "I explained to him that tax exempt bonds may not be in agreement with my Democratic philosophy about the value of taxes."

Johnie offers this advice to young women just beginning to make their own financial decisions:

- Learn to be frugal with your resources; spend your money carefully.
- Remember the environment; eventually all you buy will be discarded. Do not become attached to things.
- Make your own decisions about what you want. Do not let Wall Street and the world's symbols of success dictate your spending.

...

I hope you are inspired to incorporate some of these methods into your money management practices. And remember, strive for progress, not perfection.



Contact Karen Petersen at [karen@myMoreThanMoney.net](mailto:karen@myMoreThanMoney.net) with people or ideas you would like to see in this column.





january

february

march

april

may

june

july

august

september

october

november

december

# Twelve months to make you money smart

By KAREN PETERSEN

## Are you a busy woman?

If so, it is that much more important that you take the time to manage your money.

"Busy women, and we are all busy, do not have time to not manage their money," says Tahira Hira, ISU executive assistant to the president and a professor of consumer economics. "Effective money management does take time. Women must take the time; it is the key to financial success."

This is the perfect time to begin your financial success. 2006 is nearly history; you can look back and analyze your spending. 2007 is just starting; it's a great time to make new choices.

Each month, we will give you a new money management assignment. By the end of 2007, you will be amazed by your money management confidence.



IMAGES BY NGAIRE/233-5447

## January's assignment

"This first step is important enough to take time from work and spend a day focusing on your money management decisions," Hira says. "Include your partner if you have one. It is essential that earners and spenders understand and agree about income and spending."

Answer these questions:

1. What is your income after deductions? You need to know how much money you have to spend.
2. Record what it takes to live. What are your fixed expenses? Savings should be included.
3. What is left for discretionary spending? #1 (income) - #2 (fixed expenses) = discretionary spending
4. How much of your discretionary dollars do you spend on all other expenses?
5. Do you spend less than you earn or more than you earn?

## Next month's assignment

For next month's money management assignment, save receipts from all purchases, including spending via cash, check, debit card or credit cards.

## Want to learn together?

Hira, who has done research on gender differences in investment behavior, says "women like to learn about money management and investing in a group with other women."

If becoming a better money manager sound like a good idea to you but you find it hard to do alone, consider joining a group where you can learn with other women, including Hira and Petersen. Call Karen Petersen by phone at 232-2785 or via e-mail at Karen@myMoreThanMoney.net for more information. This group will be limited to 20; there will be no charge to attend.



# little gems

Take in some brilliant bits of advice for the month of January.



## Here's to happy hibernation

The chances are good that we will all be kept at home by weather at least once this winter. A can't-get-out day can be fun instead of frustrating if you make a few advance preparations.

- Have available something you will really enjoy doing that you don't usually have time for, such as a new novel or a craft project. Maybe you can plan your spring garden.
- Keep on hand the makings of a special dish, something new or an old favorite you don't make very often. Enjoy being able to cook at a slower pace.
- Allow for some pampering time, with special bubble bath or new makeup to try out.
- If you have children, think ahead about a picnic. Consider putting down a blanket and eating on the floor. Use paper plates and have finger food. You might even make cookies!

— Nancy Lewis

## Schoolwork daze

Overwhelmed by your child's mountains of school papers? Professional organizer Mary Sigmann, of Ames, has a system that can keep you from being buried in the deluge, as well as provide a time for encouraging your child.

- Get a basket for each child. At the end of each day, each child can put his or her papers — homework, artwork, etc. — in his or her basket.
- Make an appointment with each child to go through his or her papers — 4 p.m. Friday, for example. This is a time to give individualized attention, to monitor the child's progress and to give praise.
- At the end of each child's appointment, ask, "Which one of these papers is your favorite?" You get to pick a favorite, too,

and those two papers get filed away. The rest of the papers are recycled.

- At the end of the year, you will have a small stack of papers that you and your child can put into a scrapbook.

— Read more about Mary Sigmann on page 16.



## Making the choice to downsize

Former Iowa Sen. Johnie Hammond and her husband, Earl, recently made the decision to leave their home of 50 years to move to a new home at Northcrest in Ames. Johnie gives several reasons why they made the decision to move to a retirement community:

**ENJOYMENT:** With the move, they can enjoy a new community of people and activities. And they won't have to worry about snow removal and lawn care, or home maintenance. Just weeks ago Johnie was appalled when Earl insisted on cleaning the gutters atop a ladder.



**THEIR CHILDREN:** The move required the Hammonds to dispose of their extra possessions, which is a task they won't have to leave for their children. And since they made the choice to move, their children were not forced to make that difficult decision.

If you are thinking about moving to a retirement community, Hammond offers this advice:

**GET IN LINE.** By the time you are 50, get your name on a waiting list at your favorite retirement community, Hammond said. The waiting list is long, and the cost to reserve your space on the waiting list is low, she says, and good retirement communities, especially, have limited space.

**MOVE BEFORE YOU HAVE TO.** Do not wait until health reasons force you to leave your home.

Read Hammond's advice on financial matters on page 13.

— Karen Petersen



# 'Miracle Mary'

## Professional organizer helps people get their lives in order

By HEIDI MARTTILA-LOSURE

**W**hen I walked into Mary Sigmann's downtown Ames apartment, I started thinking like Goldilocks when she's happened upon the little bear's things — this home is not too big, and it's not too small. It's just right.

A lot of that impression, I realized as Sigmann showed me around her space, is an illusion. For most people beyond their dorm room years, Sigmann's apartment would be too small — just one bedroom; a small kitchen; a long, narrow living room; a bathroom; a small entry space that does triple duty as her office, dining room and music studio; and — here's the truly amazing part — just one closet!



But this is all professional organizer Mary Sigmann needs.

Everything in Sigmann's home supports her lifestyle, and there is no extra. This sometimes means making the decision to get rid of one thing to make

room for things that support a new interest. When Sigmann decided she wanted a keyboard, for example, she gave away 80 percent of her books and a bookshelf to make space for it. Other people might have tried to find room somewhere else for the books, but Sigmann knew that would be too much clutter for her apartment.

"And I haven't missed those books," Sigmann said.

Keeping her space organized is a priority for Sigmann, and she says it always has been. When she was a child, she would pick up brochures from doctors' offices, take them home and arrange them into categories, then pretend to answer phone calls, ready to give



By HEIDI MARTTILA-LOSURE

The pepper-themed kitchen in Mary Sigmann's apartment is small, which Sigmann says fits her lifestyle.



## Better living through organization

Mary Sigmann says being organized can help in many aspects of a person's life. "I think people are really happier when they have a handle on their environment," she says. "It just gives you more freedom in so many ways."

- Clutter on the outside leads to clutter on the inside, she says, so an ordered environment can leave you better able to focus.
- Organization can save you money: If you can't find what you need in your home, you'll go out and buy things that you already have.
- Sigmann has noticed anecdotally that people who are organized are more likely to take care of themselves physically. For example, if the dishes aren't done, you are not as likely to be motivated to fix a healthy meal, she says, and you might not schedule check-ups with your doctor as often as recommended.



When Mary Sigmann moved into her apartment, she said she thought about the most possible people she could entertain for dinner. She decided that number was four — so she has dishes for just that many.

whatever information the callers needed! Her room was always kept neat, and her toys were always in order.

"Some of us are just wired that way," Sigmann said. "I just feel better (with things organized)."

Sigmann says having her home life in order helps her when she is working as well. There are no thoughts about her own clutter to provide distractions, she says: "I am able to be 100 percent with the person I'm working with."

### Help from 'Miracle Mary'

One of those people is Erin Smidt, of West Des Moines.

"My nickname for her is 'Miracle Mary,'" Smidt said. "Her strategies and techniques are fairly simple and really powerful."

Smidt, owner of 3R PR & Marketing, said she hired Sigmann in the fall of 2004 to help her archive a three-year project. Sigmann helped her set up a system for going through a stack of at least 100 files, determining which needed to be saved and what could be shredded. Sigmann has helped Smidt with many other tasks since then.

"My ongoing challenge is how to make the most out of limited time," Smidt said, "making sure that I'm not wasting time looking for a sheet of paper, and taking care to make sure I'm tackling a project in the most efficient way."

Smidt said that with Sigmann's help she

now has a more efficient office and a more efficient routine, which has helped her be more successful.

"(It) saves me time, and it's increased my productivity and allowed me to be more creative," Smidt said. "It creates a lot of energy when you know where absolutely everything is."

Smidt has had Sigmann's help at home as well. In early December, Sigmann and Smidt were working on getting ready for Christmas. Smidt said having her children's things in order not only helps them, but it's good for her business.

"If they can find clothes that fit in less than 10 minutes, that helps me be more productive in the office," Smidt said.

### 'It's not drudgery'

Sigmann works with people of all ages, from all walks of life, with all sorts of different issues and needs. Some of the people are really busy, and they get caught up in their lives until they realize they need to retreat and get organized again.

It's time to get organized, Sigmann said, when your disorganization makes you unhappy, or when it interferes with your life.

"If you do it before it gets to that point, that's even better," she said.

The first step is making a commitment, she said. Then the tasks are divided into manageable pieces, "even if it's just a drawer, just a cabinet," she said. Finally, time is set

aside to accomplish those pieces; they are put on the calendar.

When she starts an organization project with a client, Sigmann begins with the immediate physical environment — the things that are out in the open. Then she moves on to things that are hidden, like drawers and closets. When those are in order, she addresses issues like time management and finances.



Mary Sigmann keeps all the files and books she is currently working on in a bookshelf in her entryway.



And all along the way, she's coaching.

"I ask people, where do you want to start?" Sigmann said. She likes to begin with the task that will give her clients the most satisfaction when it is done. And if they are overwhelmed with where to begin, she breaks it down for them, handing them just one stack of papers to go through, for example.

"It's not drudgery," she said. "It's an enjoyable experience."

#### 'I love everything about what I do'

Brooke Benschoter would definitely agree.

Benschoter, marketing director at Drake University and mother of three children, said she's heard of other people getting massages as a reward or a way to relax.

"My version of that is spending time with Mary," Benschoter said. "I find it freeing."

Being organized is important in Benschoter's client-driven world, she said, but she often doesn't know where to start. Sigmann was able to help her with that, as well as helping her realize that getting organized would take time.

"You don't get disorganized overnight," Benschoter said. "I was under the impression that I would take a day off and fix it."

Benschoter interviewed some other organizers when she was looking for assistance a few years ago, but she liked Sigmann's approach to managing things. Sigmann doesn't force anyone to get rid of anything they don't want to, but she encourages them to

really think about what they want to keep.

Sigmann helped her simplify and clear the clutter so she appreciates the things she does have, Benschoter said.

"And my husband loves her," Benschoter said. "Because I feel more in control, it's beneficial for everybody."

Scott Miller is another of Sigmann's happy clients. Several years ago, he said his office at the nonprofit organization Move the Mountain in Ames needed to be better organized.

"I was just dropping the ball here and there from having too many loose ends," said Miller, now CEO of the organization, which focuses on reducing poverty.

Sigmann took a look at the office, and everything that had nothing to do with Miller's work was removed. And there were a number of things that had to go, Miller said.

"I had a piano in my office," he said. "We took all that stuff out."

His office now features a clean system for organizing his notebooks, as well as whiteboards that help him keep track of tasks and a map with all of the communities he works with on it. Sigmann also helped him create more space between travel events in his calendar, so he would have more time to prepare for them and respond to what he learned from them.

They also did a lot of prioritizing, from the tasks that Miller should handle himself to the business contacts he should keep. Miller said Sigmann brought to those discussions a trusting perspective of life: Many of the things we think we'll miss if we give them up, we probably won't. Thoughts like "oh, I can't possibly live without" that thing or that vendor or even that relationship "all proved to be folly," Miller said.

Miller said being organized has helped Move the Mountain be much more successful, and that's exactly the kind of results Sigmann loves to see.

"I love everything about what I do," Sigmann said.

Apparently, it shows.

"She clearly loves coaching people, helping them be the best they can be," Smidt said. "She is as happy as you are, if not happier, when the process works."

Heidi Marttila-Losure can be reached at 232-2161, Ext. 352, or [hlosure@amestrib.com](mailto:hlosure@amestrib.com).



Everything in Sigmann's closet is clearly labeled. The clothes are pared down to what fits her and the colors that she likes to wear.





By ANDREW RULLESTAD

Mary Sigmann keeps her work space orderly and well-lit. Good lighting is very important for productivity, Sigmann says.

## Want to work with Sigmann?

Mary Sigmann charges \$65 an hour for her professional organizing coaching services, and there is a four-hour session minimum. "Believe me, you get your money's worth," she said. Learn more about Mary Sigmann's services, including workshops and workplace training, at her Web site, [www.organizercoach.com](http://www.organizercoach.com). She can be reached at 233-5191, by e-mail at [harmonypro@aol.com](mailto:harmonypro@aol.com).

## Should you hang on or let go?

If while sorting through your belongings you find yourself debating whether you should keep an item, Mary Sigmann offers this advice:

- Do you really love it? Sometimes sentimental value by itself makes an item worth keeping, but you should determine whether the emotion is strong enough to justify keeping it.
- Do you use it? If not, that's a good indication you should pass it on to someone who would.
- Does it have monetary value? Sometimes this a reason to keep an item, but it may be more beneficial for you to sell it than keep it around.
- Is it something that enhances your lifestyle, or is it interfering with your lifestyle?
- Don't tell yourself you have to keep something just because it was a gift. "Nobody can ever take the love away," Sigmann said, "but the object is not the person."
- If you purchased the item, don't tell yourself you have to keep an item because you paid such-and-such for it. The item may be costing you more than that in piece of mind. Also consider the cost of the space it is taking up: Real estate, even in your closet, has real value.
- If you are keeping something just because it might have value someday, you might need to adopt a more spiritual perspective. "Have faith," Sigmann said, that what you need will be available to you when you need it. "It's just not worth the price of hoarding it."



"I love having a large family!" Jayne Misra says.

# When many voices call you

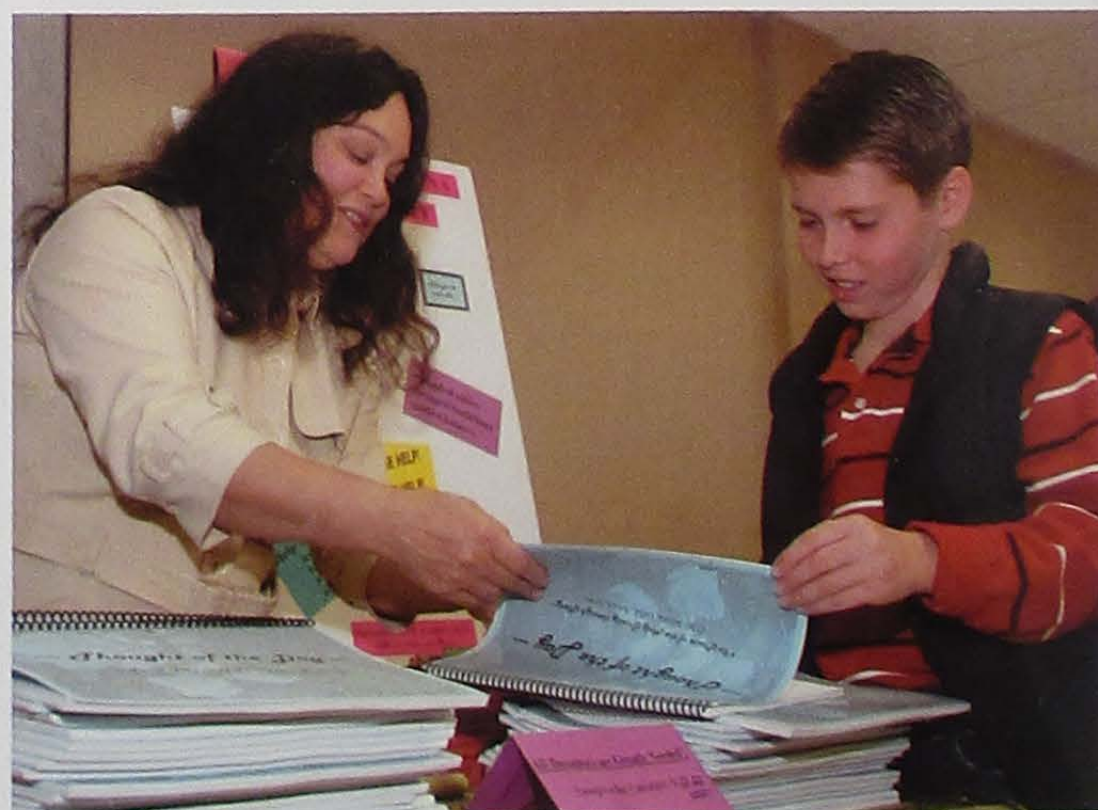
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# 'Mom'

Mothers keep priorities in mind as they take care of their big families

By SUSAN CANNY VERNON

**M**otherhood today is a juggling act as women strive to meet an ever-growing list of obligations to others while maintaining their sanity and taking care of themselves. For mothers of large families, the juggling act is more like a three-ring circus, where even the most everyday tasks can become overwhelming in volume, intensity and time required. A relaxed attitude, a zest for life and a very clear set of priorities help two Ames women keep the show going in all three rings as they parent their large families with energy, wisdom and joy. Their experiences provide valuable insight for every woman who has ever struggled under the weight of her responsibilities.



Misra's goal is to sell 2,000 calendars to raise money for Katrina survivors.



## JAYNE MISRA

**“Y**ou can't do everything,” Jayne Misra said. “Once you accept that, it frees you to do the very best you can do in everything you do.”

Misra has spent 26 years studying the art of time management in her role as the busy mother of eight children. She has learned to juggle the many responsibilities of her job with enviable skill and remarkable joy.

Misra and her husband, Manjit, have five daughters and three sons: Joy, 26; Maria, 23; John, 21; Jason, 19; Michael, 16; Jacinta, 13; Jessica, 10; and Jayna, 6.

To the observer, Misra certainly seems to “do everything.” Over the years, she has folded several tons of laundry, changed thousands of diapers, nursed children through at least 100 illnesses and cooked tens of thousands of family meals. She has driven to hundreds of dance classes, track meets, tae kwon do tournaments, gymnastics meets and school concerts. She has remained active as a volunteer in the Ames community, continues to have frequent dates with her husband of 29 years and carves out time to nourish her own body and soul daily.

Misra laughs when called a time-management expert.

“I tell my friends, ‘What most people learned in two children, it took me eight children to learn,’” she said.

**Keep it simple:** Misra limits the number of possessions in her home, the number of tasks she undertakes and even keeps her expectations for herself as simple as possible.

“Whenever I have difficulty finding places to put things to keep the house clean, I take it as

a sign I have too much, and I start giving things away and cleaning out things we don't need,” Misra said.

She applies the same principle to her schedule. Jayne enjoys volunteer work, but her activities are carefully selected so they do not detract from her responsibilities to her family. She makes rosaries for her church while waiting to pick up her children at their activities, teaches English as a Second Language while her children are in school and serves as room mother for

the moment I go to sleep at night,” she said, “and I am never doing one thing at a time. I always try to accomplish two things at once.” She catches up on reading, writing, sewing or other quiet activities while waiting to pick up her children from their many activities. She combines her exercise time and her prayer time. She folds laundry while making phone calls or waiting for something to cook.

“I use the little pieces of time I find in my day to accomplish many things,” she said.



Five days a week, Misra combines prayer and exercise at Ada Hayden Park.

her daughter's fifth-grade class. She is also a favorite visitor to her children's schools, renowned for her storytelling skills. She enjoys sharing her time and talents but is careful to keep it simple and not overburden herself.

Most importantly, Misra keeps her outlook on life simple: “My first priority is, and always has been, my children,” she said. That single priority guides her decisions throughout her day.

**Make every moment count:** “I am busy from the moment I wake up in the morning until

**Ask for help:** “You shouldn't be shy about asking for help from a friend when you need it,” she insisted. She has at times enlisted the help of friends to clean her house and drive her children to practices and returns the favor when they need help from her.

Misra finds her best helpers among her own household, however. She expects her family members to pitch in and work as a team to keep their home and schedules running smoothly.

“I do laundry every day,” she

said, “but by the time my children are 10 or 12, they are doing their own laundry. I can't be responsible for everything.”

Housecleaning is another area where she expects her small army to fall in and work.

“I used to assign a room to each child to clean, but it resulted in a lot of squabbling as children dumped the piles from their rooms into the rooms their siblings were cleaning. Now we just declare war on dirt as a family.” Every child has a task to accomplish as the family pulls together to tidy their home. The smallest children set to work polishing the kitchen chairs and take pride in helping from their earliest days.

“I never want my children to live like guests in their own home,” she said, though sometimes it is difficult to balance a child's personal responsibilities with his family responsibilities.

Misra related a story about asking an older son to put some towels away upstairs. Her son was insistent that he was in the middle of his homework. “If you finish your homework right now, you will learn your math,” she told him, “but if you take a break and put away the towels, you will learn a lifetime of service.” He put the towels away.

#### **Nourish your marriage:**

After 29 years of marriage, Jayne and Manjit Misra are still very much in love. They have made their marriage a priority and regularly set aside time to be alone together. “You have to maintain a strong base for your children. A strong relationship between parents helps the child grow strong and secure,” Misra said. “Whenever I start to get crabby or acting less like myself, my children tell me, ‘You need to go out with Dad.’ I do, and it makes

by SMALL DOG PRODUCTIONS/232-3203



me feel much better, much happier."

Making time to take a walk or go out to lunch with her husband has not always been easy, especially when her children were small, but she has always viewed that time as essential to her parenting.

"You never get the time," she stressed. "You make the time, and it's worth it. The kids can see it, too."

**Take care of yourself:** "I learned a long time ago you can't pour from an empty pitcher," she said. With that in mind, Misra has always made time for herself. At least five times a week she rides her bike in the peace of Ada Hayden Park to keep her body strong and her spirit centered.

"That is my exercise time and my prayer time," she said. "I

pray, and sometimes I just allow myself to be quiet and to listen."

She also enjoys spending time writing and has recently completed a "Thought a Day" calendar, which she is trying to publish as a fundraiser for Katrina victims.

When her children were very small, making time for herself was more difficult than it is today. Often she exercised with her children, jumping on the trampoline while they played, walking in the front yard with a baby monitor on or strapping them in the bicycle seat for a ride. "I had to be really flexible," she said. She swapped babysitting time with other moms and learned to fit a lot into brief moments alone.

Occasionally, Misra's need for reflection has required longer respites. At those times, her hus-

band has been supportive of her need to get away for a while. He spends his vacation time caring for the children while she travels. Sometimes with an infant in tow and sometimes alone, Jayne has traveled to Rome and Fatima, Guadeloupe, Portland, Canada and Mexico to attend retreats or spend quiet time alone. She chooses spiritual vacations where "the wardrobe is simple, the expenses are at a minimum and the refreshment is awesome."

Taking time to renew herself has allowed Misra to maintain the physical and emotional strength necessary to be a good mother.

**Enjoy!** With the volume of work involved in mothering eight children, it would be very easy to become overwhelmed, but Misra chooses not to let that happen.

"When you have a large family, you have made all the mistakes," she said. A mother shouldn't be afraid to make mistakes. When I see all the good things get better, I don't think of mistakes or of all the things that have gone undone. I only think of the good things. A lot of times I let the dishes sit so I can play."

She enjoys the diversity in her large family and likes to spend time listening to her children and enjoying their company. If that means occasionally ignoring dust or turning down a request to serve on a committee, she is happy to do it.

"Your children are a gift. Have fun with them!" she said. "Everything you do in your life, you should do with zeal and enthusiasm."

That includes motherhood.

## DONNA MOORE



Donna Moore gives Anne her clothes as the Moore children do laundry detail.

**D**onna Moore stands near the beginning of the path Jayne Misra has traveled. With five children born within seven years, Moore has years of carpooling, laundry and hectic schedules ahead of her. The Moore home is constantly abuzz with the activity of Stephen, 9; Katie, 7; Michael, 5; Anne, 3; and Libby, 20 months. Though Misra and Moore are at different points in their motherhood, their attitudes towards parenting and managing time are similar. Like Misra, Moore enjoys her busy life and has developed systems for managing her many responsibilities.

**Work as a team:** The daily wear and tear on a home is multiplied when a family has many children. Tasks smaller families can do on a weekly basis, large families must do daily. Every member of the Moore family plays a role in keeping their home

running smoothly.

The chores begin as soon as they awaken. Moore's husband, Brent, feeds the children breakfast while she gets herself ready in the morning. After breakfast, their sons gather laundry from around the house and take it to the laundry room and take out the garbage while their daughters clear the dishes and tidy the living room. Once the children are at school, Moore sets to work on the rest of the house.

"We stick to a schedule whenever we can," she said.

Each task has its assigned time for completion — dishes, vacuuming, meal times, bath times. Moore begins and ends her day with laundry, washing all day and folding into the evening hours.

"I do six loads of laundry a day," she said. "If I don't start right away, it doesn't get done."

After dinner each night, Brent





Dana Moore, shown here with her daughters Katie, Libby and Anne, relies on the lists in her notebook to keep her family organized.

and Donna start to work folding laundry piled high on their kitchen counter. Each child is responsible for putting away his or her own laundry, and Moore has placed labels on each dresser drawer to help them accomplish this. For the smallest children, the labels include pictures to allow them self-sufficiency. Before bedtime, every child lays out his or her own clothes for the day ahead so the next morning will begin smoothly.

Some days require more than the routine chores, and the team concept becomes even more important.

"When we have many items needing done, we say, 'Line up.' The kids get in a line, and we assign a chore. When one person is done, we stress that you help another person. The chores get done quickly with many hands."

**Make lists:** "I make lists to keep track of everything," she said.

She recommends keeping a notebook in the family car to jot down responsibilities as they arise over the course of the day. As her children get older and become involved in more activities, this has become increasingly important to Moore. "Some days we live in our van," she said.

**Prioritize:** "You have to decide what is really important to you," she said.

For Donna and Brent, the top priority is always "to raise loving and compassionate children." Towards that goal, they stress the importance of time spent together as a family. They limit the number of activities in which their children participate and eat dinner together as a family every night. "It is very important to have that time together," she said.

At times, prioritizing within a large family becomes difficult, however.

"In a large family, we only have a set amount of time and a

set amount of money. We try to be fair to all, but some days one child may need more than another. When my children are grown, I want them to remember they were all loved equally."

**Have Fun:** "Sometimes you just have to let things go," she

said. "Everything can't be picture perfect."

Like Misra, Moore delights in the variety of personalities within her large household and cherishes time spent with her children. She makes sure to take time to play each and every day.



by SMALL DOG PRODUCTIONS/232-3203

Nine-year-old Stephen pitches in to help with dinner. The family eats together every night.



The recipes for Cranberry and Prune Pie, below, and Aunt Mary's Ample Apple Pie, right, can be found on page 26.

## [ FOOD BITES ]

2 $\pi$ r shared

By HEIDI MARTTILA-LOSURE

I had long been mystified by the fickle nature of pie crusts. I used the same recipe every time I made a pie, and as far as I could tell, I followed the instructions pretty closely each time, but the results varied.

They varied quite a bit, actually. Sometimes I got compliments on a light, flaky crust; other times, I had to get out a chisel to serve it.

My aunt-in-law, Mary Schaeffer-Losure, offered to show me her tried-and-true method for pie crusts, as well as the ways she likes to improvise. A friend, Nicole Janney, of Boone, brought her pie drawer and an old recipe and joined in the fun.



Mix together flour and salt.

Add cold lard and cut into flour using a pastry cutter.

Mix until the mixture resembles small peas. Don't overmix! "The more you play with it, the less good it will be," Mary says.



Add water a little at a time, adding just enough water to make the mixture stick into a ball. For a two-crust pie, divide the mixture into two balls. Wrap the balls in plastic wrap and refrigerate.



While the dough is in the refrigerator, prepare the filling (see recipes on page 26).



When the dough is cold, take one of the balls from the refrigerator and flatten slightly on a lightly floured surface. (A pastry cloth and a pastry sleeve on the rolling pin make this job easier.)



Nicole Janney and Mary Schaeffer-Losure measure sugar for the filling of Cranberry and Prune Pie.

### Traditional pie crust\*

This is the recipe Mary Schaeffer-Losure has used since she was a kid in 4-H.

2 cups sifted all-purpose flour  
a scant teaspoon salt  
2/3 cup shortening (lard is best)  
1/4 to 1/3 cup cold water

\* Mary also snuck in a tablespoon of dark brown sugar into this recipe.





Roll out the dough, rolling dough more toward the center than out toward the edges.



Using the pie pan as a guide, trim off the excess (more than about one inch out from pan's edge). The trimmings can be used to patch cracks and fill out the circle; use the rolling pin to press the "patches" into place.



Here's the tricky part: Roll the crust onto the rolling pin, then unroll it into the pie pan. If you've used a pastry cloth, this is pretty easy.



Press the dough down into the pan. Leave any excess in place for now.



Spoon the filling into the crust. Roughen the edge of the pie all the way around with a fork and brush with milk.



Roll out the second ball of dough as described above. Using a lattice cutter (or, in a pinch, a pizza cutter), cut the dough into strips.



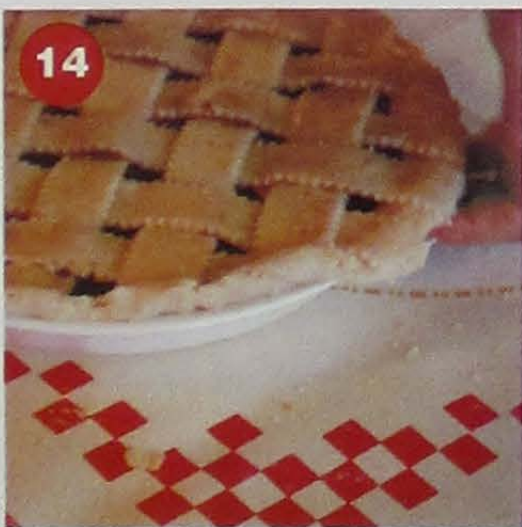
Starting with a center strip, put every other strip on the pie, leaving slight gaps between.



Now start weaving: Pull back every other strip on the pie halfway. Place the first crosswise strip on top of the strips you didn't pull back; now put back the strips that were pulled back, and the crosswise strip should be over one strip, under the next.



Continue adding strips, pulling alternate strips back and weaving until the lattice top covers the pie. Press the lattice ends into the bottom crust around the edge of the pie and trim crusts to 1/2 inch from the pie plate.



Fold edges of crust under, pinching slightly to raise the crust edge.



Using your fingers as shown, form the crust edge into a "zig zag."



Bake pie as the recipe directs. Voila!



## Cranberry and Prune Pie

Adapted by Nicole Janney from "Good Housekeeping's Book of Menus," 1925. If the word "prune" turns you off, think "dried plum." Or better yet, think cherry, because that's what this pie fools you into thinking it has in it.

2 1/4 cups halved cranberries  
1 1/2 cup prunes  
1 1/2 tablespoon butter  
1 1/2 cup sugar  
1 1/2 tablespoon flour

Pastry

Mix together the halved cranberries, the prunes cooked until soft and cut in small pieces, the sugar and the flour. Turn into a pie plate lined with pastry, dot over with the butter, cover with strips of pastry and bake at 450 degrees for 20 minutes.

## Aunt Mary's Ample Apple Pie

Mary Schaeffer-Losure made up this pie as she went during our pie-baking gathering. The ingredients for the crust are based on many pie recipes she has made throughout the years. Use the directions on pages 24 and 25 as a guide for making the crust.

### For crust:

3/8 cups whole wheat flour	1/3 cup + 1 tablespoon lard
2 1/8 cups all-purpose flour	1/3 cup + 1 tablespoon butter
1/2 teaspoon baking powder	1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 tablespoon dark brown sugar	1/3 to 1/2 cup ice water
1 egg, beaten and divided in half	1 tablespoon milk

Mix the dry ingredients of the crust together. Cut in the lard and butter. Mix half of the beaten egg, the lemon juice and the water together. Add an ice cube to make sure mixture stays cold. Add this liquid a bit at a time to the dry ingredients. Divide dough into two balls. Refrigerate.

### For filling:

10 cups sliced apples	1 tablespoon lemon juice
1/4 cup all-purpose flour	6 tablespoons brown sugar

Mix sliced apples with lemon juice, brown sugar and flour.

Roll out one ball of dough for bottom crust. Place crust in pie pan. Spoon apple mixture into the crust a bit at a time, using the back of the spoon between additions to press the apples into the crust to eliminate air spaces. Roughen the edges of the bottom pie crust and moisten with milk. Roll out top crust. Cut any design you choose into the top crust to create vent holes, then place it on the pie. Press edges of top and bottom crust together and fold under, trimming off any excess. Design edging as desired. Brush pie with rest of egg mixture. Bake at 450 degrees for 10 minutes; reduce heat to 350 degrees and bake until apple mixture bubbles, about 45 minutes.



# RETIREMENT....

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## Ames MOPs (Mothers of Preschoolers)

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# Got time to read?

By MARISA MYHRE

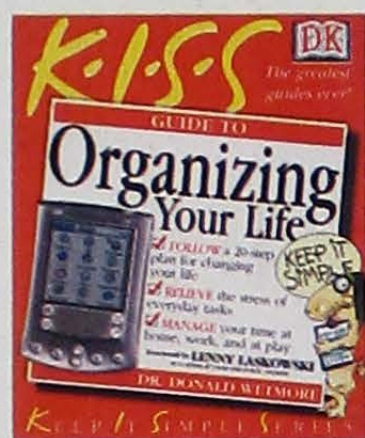
There are two sorts of time management books out there on the market. Some are in-depth books full of reading and writing and schedules that attack time management head-on and require a real commitment of time (which is no doubt ironic in this case) and energy.

There are also the more simple books with indexes, perfect for the person in the rush without a lot of time to commit to the subject.

## Quicker reads

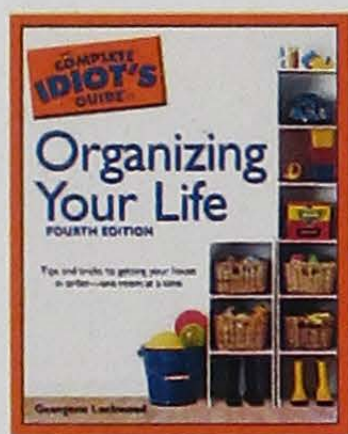
**KISS Guide to Organizing Your Life**  
(Keep It Simple Series)

By DONALD WETMORE



**The Complete Idiot's Guide to Organizing your Life, 4th Edition**  
(The Complete Idiot's Guide)

By GEORGENE LOCKWOOD



For those in a rush, here are two titles, put out by well-known publishers. The KISS guide (Keep It Simple Series—they seem to have changed the traditional “stupid” in the description) and the Complete Idiot's Guide.

They both contain tips on time management as well as organizational strategies. Still, the appearance of the two of them couldn't be more different.

The KISS guide, written by

Donald Wetmore, a professional speaker of 20 years, stands out as the brighter of the two. Almost every page has a color photo that is larger than the text on the page. Each page is color coded by chapter, making it easy to flip through.

For those who want simple steps and quick tips, especially anyone with ADD-like symptoms who wants information with a heavy dose of graphics, this book will definitely appeal.

In contrast, the CIG guide, written by Georgene Lockwood, is completely in black and white and has large amounts of text on each page. But it seems to be the more helpful of the two.

Its index is considerably longer and covers a more diverse set of topics. Where the KISS guide covered the standard sections on personal life and a simple idea of time logs and organization, the CIG breaks the information into more manageable pieces as well as gives you more of it.

For example, its organization section goes room by room giving tips. It not only mentions delegating but how to deal with those you delegate to. It also had a section on dealing with the holidays and a list of phone numbers to call for any professional help, from credit counseling to anxiety disorders.

This CIG guide is a less colorful, less rambunctious look at the problem, but is a more in-depth guide.

## For those ready for a life overhaul

**Time Management from the Inside Out**

By JULIE MORGENSTERN



This book I looked at requires a serious commitment for the reader. Julie Morgenstern, who has written several self-help books on organization, provides a wealth of lists and exercises designed to help the reader find more organization in their time and their life in this book.

She starts by asserting that she is not going to tell the reader to calm down, or to fill every waking moment with activity, the two extremes most time management books take. Instead she guides readers through exercises that help them realize what they spend time doing and how to make schedules that let them find more time for the priorities in their lives.

For example, she suggests readers make a list of what is

most important in their lives and the goals they want to accomplish as reminders of why they are sticking to the time management plan.

She also suggests readers make a list of activities commonly done during the day, and for each how long they think it will take and how long it actually takes, or divide activities into several steps and applying times to each step.

She leads readers through a process to help reduce the time needed on tasks and to find the right time for each. There's a questionnaire at the end of the book, and she orders readers not to deviate from the plan until they can answer “true” to each item.

Morgenstern carefully lays out each step of the process. Shaded boxes with stories from people who have applied the process or encountered the problems described appear throughout as emotional connections in what would be an otherwise dry book.

The systems described do have the advantage of working for everyone: Both the staunch businessman and a housewife can find more time with this book.



Marisa Myhre lives and works in Ames. She can be reached at 233-3610 or [marisamyhre@hotmail.com](mailto:marisamyhre@hotmail.com).



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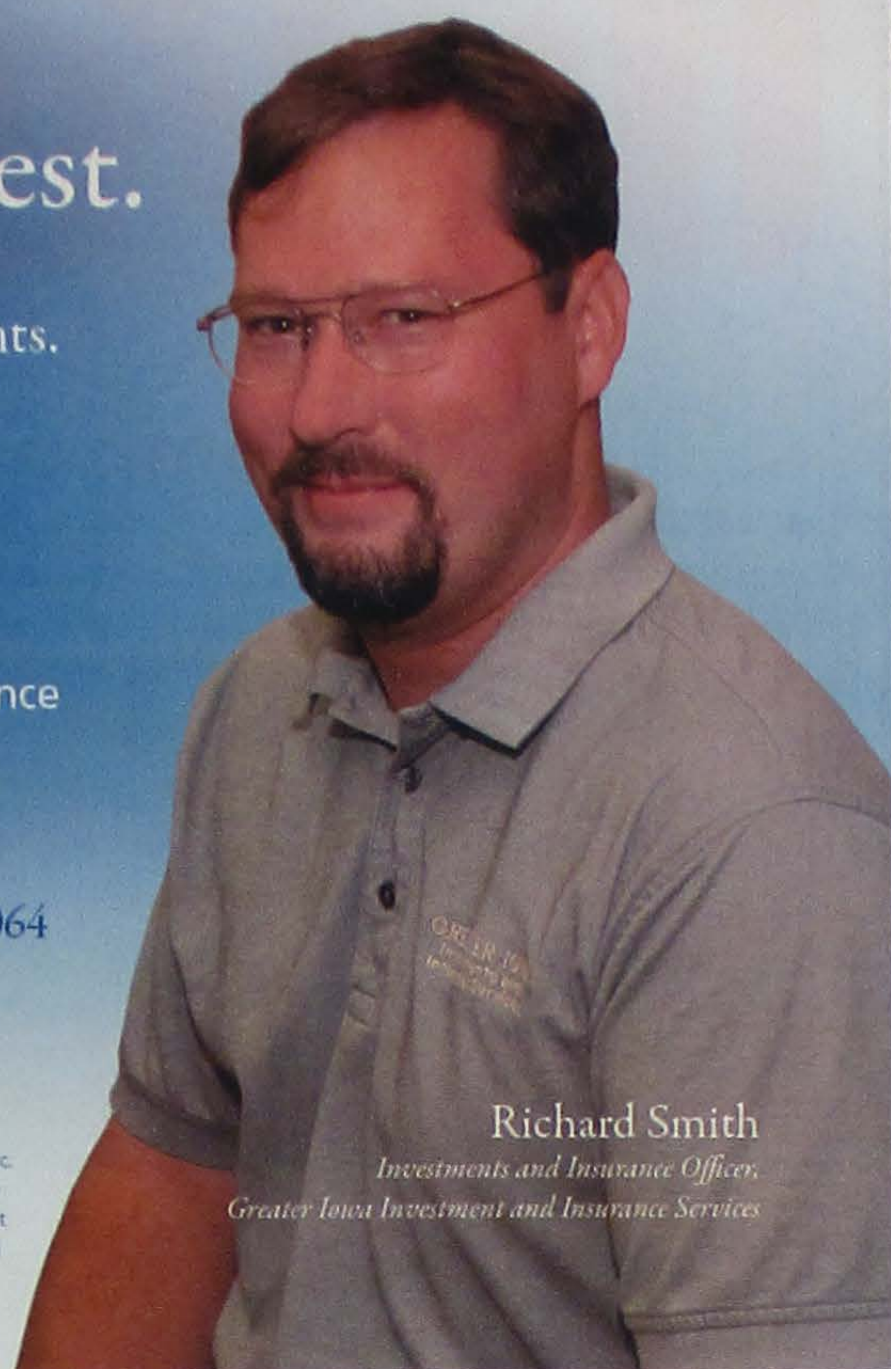
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# hue & cry

Definition: Any loud clamor or protest intended to incite others to action.

## Time management 101

By HEIDI MARTTILA-LOSURE

**O**K, it's time to confess. This issue of Facets was not put out for you, the reader. It's really a self-help course for me. I picked time management and organization as the topic this month because I tend to be behind schedule and disorganized, and I need all the help I can get.

Take a look at my last weekend to see what I'm up against:

**Friday, 5:45 a.m.:** Got up to get my daughter, Sofia, ready for daycare. Scheduled to work the night shift on the copy desk (I'm a copy editor in addition to being Facets editor), so didn't have to work my regular morning shift. Decided to make the most of the morning by sending Sofi to daycare anyway. My husband dropped Sofi off at daycare on his way to work.

**Friday, 6:35 a.m.:** Made myself a cup of coffee and set to power-cleaning the house, which had pretty much gone to ruin the week before. Got two rooms cleaned and a massive pile of laundry done; felt pretty proud of myself.

**Friday, 11:30 a.m.:** Left home to go to my husband's work to trade cars, so I had the car with the car seat in it. Had intended to leave at 11:15, but had tried to fit in a bit of last-minute cleaning before leaving. Got the car and made it to Sofia's daycare just before the dollar-a-minute late charge kicked in.

**Friday afternoon:** Cooked lunch for Sofi and me and then spent time playing with Sofi. Put Sofi down for her nap at 2:45; knew I needed a nap too before my night shift, but decided to finish cleaning in the kitchen before I lay down myself. Finally fell into bed at 3:15.

**Friday, 3:50 p.m.:** My husband woke me up; left for work at 4:15.

**Saturday, 1:30 a.m.:** Finished the night shift at work; headed for home. Went to bed at 2:15.

**Saturday, 6:30 a.m.:** Sofi woke me up to nurse. When she was done, Dave took her to eat breakfast and play so I could go back to sleep.

**Saturday, 8:50 a.m.:** Got up to get the house ready for cookie baking. We had invited a friend to join us at 11. The dining room table, where we planned to do the baking, was piled high with a week's worth of mail and other detritus. Was still cleaning when the friend arrived.

**Saturday, 3:30 p.m.:** Left for work. Cookie baking took a lot longer than planned, partly because of there was a tired baby about, partly because we hadn't got the ingredients ready (Dave had to make a run to the store for butter) or looked over the recipe before our friend came over. Only a third of the dough was baked by the time I had to leave for work. I had promised to bring cookies to church, so Dave baked several more batches Saturday evening.

**Sunday, 3:15 a.m.:** Problems at work kept me there late. Got to bed at 4 a.m.

**Sunday, 5:30 a.m.:** Sofi woke me up to nurse. Went back to sleep.

**Sunday, 8:25 a.m.:** Looked at the clock and sprang out of bed; had 15 minutes to get ready for church to make it by 9. Dave said he and Sofi were coming, too; finally left for church at 9:10. Got the cookies to the table before the crowd left the sanctuary, though.

**Sunday, 11:30 a.m.:** Realized we still hadn't gotten a babysitter for the Christmas party that evening, after our first plan fell through. Called a friend who agreed to watch Sofi. Said we'd be there about 5:15.

**Sunday, 1 p.m.:** Took a nap. Dave watched Sofi.

**Sunday, 3 p.m.:** Dave took a nap. I watched Sofi. Sofi still didn't nap. Realized that much of the cleaning I had done Friday morning had already been undone by a little girl who can't even walk yet.

**Sunday, 5:30 p.m.:** Left for the party. Dropped Sofi off at 5:50, 35 minutes late. Made it to the party at shortly after 6.

**Sunday, 8:30 p.m.:** Realized as we drove to pick up Sofi that our friend wouldn't accept money from us but that we should have a gift for her. Back-tracked to the grocery store to buy gift.

**Sunday, 9:30 p.m.:** Finally got Sofi back to sleep after she woke up while we were putting her in the crib. Realized I hadn't gotten done any of the writing I'd planned to do over the weekend. Thought ahead to the meetings I had Monday and Tuesday nights, realized I wouldn't have time to write then, either. Or bake the cookie dough, which had partly dried out because I hadn't thought to put plastic wrap on it. Too tired to do anything but check my e-mail and go to sleep.

...

So Wednesday night, after we'd finally gotten Sofi to sleep at 8:30 p.m. (the phone kept ringing at just the wrong moment), as I was getting out the cookie dough and rolling pin and telling my husband that I still had writing to do after I finished baking, he looked at me and asked, "Why do you do this to yourself?"

Good question. I guess the answer has to do with the expectations I have for myself. I agreed to work that weekend even though I knew I would be really busy,

because it was only fair that I do my share of weekend shifts. And how could I not have time to bring treats to church? So of course I said yes to that. And I made cookie dough in the proportions my family always makes it — three times the recipe — not thinking that in past years it took my mother, my sister and me several hours to bake all those cookies, and there wasn't a baby hanging on to my pants leg at the time.

The problem is I want to all the things on my list (well, maybe not "clean the house," but a person can only delegate so much of that). How can I fit it all in?

So here's what I've learned from this month's Facets articles: I can't fit it all in. At least not if I set my standards higher than anyone else expects them to be. I still have to do my share of weekend shifts, but I could have tried to find another weekend that wasn't right before Facets deadline. I could have purchased the cookies to bring to church; the store-bought ones go over just as well. And baking just one batch of cookies would have been better for my waistline, anyway.

Well, if this has been a graded course on time management and organization, I don't think I'm passing yet. But I've still got time to get better. That's one lesson on time management I have learned: We've all got the same amount of hours in the day. The key is letting go of what doesn't matter so we can focus on what does.



Heidi Marttila-Losure is editor of Facets. She can be reached at 232-2161, Ext. 352, or [hlosure@amestrib.com](mailto:hlosure@amestrib.com).



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